

TOWN OF NEWFIELDS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 6:37pm. Selectmen present were: Janet Smith, Wes Moore, and James McIlroy. Others present were: Chief Reed, Lt. Gould, Chris Fysalis, Laurie Frysalis, Alison Watts (Conservation Commission), and Jed Rumford.

The Writ of Mandamus was reviewed. Janet faxed the information to Primex Insurance, the Town's Insurance Carrier, and will wait for instructions from Primex on how to proceed. Town Counsel, Fran Lane will be advised when we hear from Primex. This is in regard to the noise complaint by a property owner.

Chris and Laurie Frysalis discussed their concerns with the new turn-around cut by Severino on Halls Mill Road. This turn-around is not big enough for trucks to safely use and is next to an existing cut. They also asked about the stone wall being extended and advised that the gate does not prevent vehicles from driving onto the Piscassic Greenway property via a Class 6 road. James stated that the Rockingham Land Trust now owns the Piscassic Greenway property and they need to be approached with regard to these issues. James also suggested that the Selectmen go look at the area being discussed.

It was agreed that the Selectmen will speak with Reuben Hull, the Town Planner, to determine the Planning Board's agreement with Rockingham Land Trust about these issues and report back to Chris and Laurie.

Chris and Laurie asked if they could have a sign posted "Do Not Block Driveway". The Selectmen advised that this would require an Ordinance. Chief Reed suggested that the Frysalis' post "No Trespassing" signs to give the Police Department the legal right to arrest those who trespass on their property.

Chief Reed advised that a Bestway Disposal truck damaged town property last week while turning around on Halls Mill Road. The truck left the scene without reporting the accident to the police. Chief Reed contacted the truck driver and took a report. Bestway then cleaned up the damage – disposing of a fallen tree and brushing out tire tracks.

A resident spoke to Chief Reed about cars parking in front of the gate to the baseball fields behind the Elementary School. The concern is that emergency vehicles would have trouble getting to the fields in case of an emergency. The resident asked that "No Parking" signs be posted. Again, this would require an ordinance to be enforceable. At this time, the Selectmen are not in favor of an ordinance.

The Chief has enough police volunteers to cover the shifts required for a DUI Grant and will go ahead to request the Grant. Janet asked if fuel or any other expenses are paid by the Grant. The Grant covers the officers time only.

A complaint was received about a property on Piscassic Road becoming a junkyard. Chief Reed spoke with the property owner and explained that one unregistered vehicle is allowed. The property owner has several vehicles out back along with other miscellaneous items. Janet would like a letter sent to the property owner and will provide a sample for Nancy to use.

Chief Reed and Lt. Gould formed a Venture Crew. This provides outdoor adventures for boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20. Selectmen Wes Moore is a volunteer with the group.

Alison Watts was in to update the Selectmen on the Cole property. Rockingham Land Trust has paid \$50,000. for the option to purchase this property. The Town has committed \$130,000. for this purchase to come from the Conservation Commission funds. Rockingham Land Trust will own the property and the Town of Newfields will have an easement. The Planning Board will be asked to review the easement to determine whether a driveway permit will be needed for access to the property or whether the property can be accessed from any portion off of the town road.

Brian Hart of the RLT is writing a grant application for funds from the New Hampshire Farmland Protection Program for the purchase of this property. This grant would very likely be granted because a Purchase and Sales Agreement is in hand. Alison asked if the Selectmen would be willing to sign the grant application for the Town of Newfields and all of the Selectmen agreed. Brian will bring the application to a Selectmen's Meeting for their signatures.

Alison then advised that the Town of Newfields must share the easement with the Federal Government. This is standard procedure when federal funds are used for the purchase.

Alison advised the Selectmen that they would like to interview other attorneys for future easements. The Conservation Commission has a list of attorneys they are interested in – most are in Concord or Manchester. The Commission also made a request to be involved in the language of the easements as they are written because the Commission Members are the enforcing officials.

Jed Rumford was in to speak to the Selectmen about several items:

1. He recommends that the heating system in the Town Hall be remedied before next winter. This can be accomplished by re-routing the bathroom and back room ducts to the big furnace and leave the small furnace to heat the downstairs only. Jed is willing to get estimates from some contractors for this work.
2. Is the Police Department moving into the old Post Office Building? The Selectmen have not made a decision on this yet. Jed suggested using the old

Finn property on Piscassic Road for the police. The Town already owns the property and it is a central location. The building appears to be large enough for the Police Department and would have room for expansion, if needed.

3. Jed recommends a Town Ordinance to stop the importation of snow from out town. The Selectmen are not in favor of any more ordinances at this time.
4. Jed also asked for an ordinance to prohibit advertising/political signs from being posted on town property (including the Town Hall on Election Day). The Selectmen agree that signs should not be on town property. However, they do not agree with prohibiting signs on Election Day. They did agree that candidates should take their signs with them when they leave Town Hall and not leave them for the Town to clean up.

Chief Reed and Lt. Gould came back into the meeting to discuss the Police Department Benchmarking. Wes had met with Chief Reed earlier to talk about this and it is his opinion that benchmarking is micro-managing. (He agrees with Janet that the Selectmen need to keep the Town's costs down.) Wes feels that the Police Department is doing a fine job, feels a 4th officer is okay and supports the Chief. He feels the Chief should run his own department and has the funds in the budget for one more full-time officer.

James said a lot of time and effort is needed to research the benchmarking. He personally feels that twenty hours of coverage by the Police Department each day is appropriate. James also feels that level funding is needed in the coming years, keeping in mind that fuel, insurance, and retirement costs will increase with an additional full-time officer.

Janet stated that she fully supports the Chief and the Department and they are doing a fine job. She also mentioned that we would be the only town with a population of less than 2,000 with four full-time police officers.

Janet made a motion not to hire a 4th officer. The motion was not seconded.

James mentioned that we should be proud of the achievements of the Newfields Police Department vs. other police departments. He feels that we should preserve the gains the department has achieved and not spend any more time on benchmarking for limited financial gains.

James made a motion to remove Benchmarking the Police Department from the Open Item List and to support the hiring of a 4th full-time police officer per the Police Department Budget approved by the voters (with an understanding with the Police Chief to maintain a level budget in 2007 and 2008). Wes seconded the motion. The motion passed with two votes in favor and one against.

The Chief brought the Selectmen up to date on the Memorial Day Parade. Horses have been committed to be in the parade along with old cars and motorcycles.

The Police Department members and their families are working a Trash Pick-up Day on May 28th. The trash will be picked up along Route 87. Any other volunteers are welcome to join the Police Department picking up trash.

Wes made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 25th Selectmen's Meeting with minor changes. James seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Wes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm. The motion was seconded by James and both were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Spencer